

CUET · POLITICAL SCIENCE · CLASS XI · CODE 323

Citizenship

CUET unit: Political Theory — Citizenship, Equality, Rights, Nationalism

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Snapshot

- Citizenship is "full and equal membership of a political community".
- It explores debates around full and equal membership, equal rights for marginalised groups, the criteria states use to grant citizenship, the problem of stateless people, and the idea of global citizenship.
- It draws on examples ranging from the French Revolution (1789), South African apartheid, Martin Luther King Jr.'s Civil Rights Movement, Olga Tellis judgment (1985), to controversies over religious symbols in France.
- It links citizenship to T. H. Marshall's framework of civil, political and social rights and argues citizenship is a "project" — an evolving ideal — not a finished accomplishment.
- CUET frequently tests the meaning of citizenship, modes of acquiring Indian citizenship, the Olga Tellis case, Marshall's three rights, and the difference between national and global citizenship.

Detailed Notes

2.1 Core concepts

Citizenship is "**full and equal membership of a political community**" (NCERT §6.1, p. 80). In the contemporary world, states give their members a collective political identity along with certain rights — political rights such as the right to vote, civil rights such as freedom of speech and belief, and socio-economic rights such as a minimum wage and the right to education. The quantum of rights enjoyed varies across states, but **equality of rights and status** is the basic content of citizenship in all democracies. Citizenship is not a static legal status but a "**project**" — an evolving ideal that has had to be fought for in long struggles such as the French Revolution (1789), the anti-colonial movements in Asia and Africa, the South African struggle against apartheid (which continued until the early 1990s), and ongoing women's and dalit movements in India (NCERT §6.1, p. 81). It is the meeting point of legal-political status and ongoing democratic activity.

Citizenship is more than a state-to-citizen relationship. It also generates **citizen-citizen obligations**. Beyond the legal duties of paying taxes and obeying laws, there is the moral obligation "to participate in and contribute to the shared life of the community" (NCERT §6.1, p. 82). Citizens are also the inheritors and trustees of the country's

culture and natural resources, and this trusteeship is reflected in the constitutional Fundamental Duties.

§ 6.2 Full and equal membership (pp. 82–86) — the **insider–outsider divide**. The slogan "Mumbai for Mumbaikars" illustrates how, when jobs, education, medical care or natural resources are perceived as scarce, demands arise to restrict the entry of "outsiders" — even when the outsiders are fellow Indian citizens (NCERT §6.2, p. 82). The Constitution's **right to freedom of movement** allows workers to migrate for jobs — IT workers to Bangalore, Kerala nurses across India, construction workers across regions — yet such migration often triggers local resistance demanding job reservation or language tests (NCERT §6.2, pp. 83–84). The boxed extract on **Martin Luther King Jr.** (p. 83) reproduces his argument from the 1950s US Civil Rights Movement against the **Segregation Laws** in the southern United States: segregation is "**social leprosy on the body politic**," it diminishes the life of whites no less than blacks, and it creates artificial boundaries between people. King called for peaceful, non-violent resistance. NCERT derives the **right to protest** from the freedom of expression — provided protest does not harm the life or property of others or the State — and stresses that disputes should be settled by negotiation and discussion rather than force (NCERT §6.2, pp. 84–86).

§ 6.3 Equal Rights (pp. 86–88) takes the urban poor — slum-dwellers and squatters — as the lens for asking whether all citizens are guaranteed basic rights and a minimum standard of living. Slum-dwellers contribute significantly to the urban economy as hawkers, petty traders, scavengers, domestic workers, plumbers and mechanics; small businesses like cane-weaving, textile printing and tailoring often develop in slums. The **National Policy on Urban Street Vendors** was framed in **January 2004** to give recognition and regulation to street vendors so that they could carry on their profession without harassment, subject to reasonable regulations (NCERT §6.3, p. 87). The boxed profile of **T. H. Marshall (1893–1981)**, the British sociologist whose **Citizenship and Social Class** (1950) is the modern locus classicus of citizenship studies, defines citizenship as "**a status bestowed on those who are full members of a community**" — the key concept being **equality** in both the quality and quantity of rights and duties (NCERT p. 87). Marshall identifies **three kinds of rights — civil, political and social**: civil rights protect life, liberty and property; political rights enable participation in governance; social rights give access to education and employment. Citizenship for Marshall counters the divisive effects of class hierarchy.

The Indian case study in this section is the landmark **Olga Tellis v. Bombay Municipal Corporation (1985)** judgment (box, p. 88). The Supreme Court held that **Article 21's right to life includes the right to livelihood**, so pavement dwellers, if evicted, must first be provided alternative accommodation under the right to shelter. NCERT extends the equal-rights discussion to tribal people and forest dwellers, who face threats to livelihood from population pressure, commercial mining interests and tourism; the state must protect them without endangering national development. Importantly, "equal rights for citizens need not mean that **uniform policies** have to be applied to all people" —

different groups have different needs, and to make people genuinely more equal those needs must inform policy (NCERT §6.3, p. 88).

§ 6.4 Citizen and Nation (pp. 90–92) takes up the nation-state. One of the earliest assertions of the sovereignty of the nation-state and democratic citizenship rights was made by French revolutionaries in **1789**; national identity is expressed through flag, anthem, language and ceremonies. France claims to be secular and inclusive but its insistence on assimilation into a single national culture has led to controversies — for instance, the banning of Sikh boys' turbans and Muslim girls' headscarves in some schools because they brought religious symbols into the public sphere (NCERT §6.4, pp. 90–91). Citizenship criteria vary: in **Israel and Germany**, religion or ethnic origin may be given priority — the children of Turkish workers born in Germany have long been debating automatic citizenship. India defines itself as a **secular, democratic nation-state**; despite Partition (1947) it kept its secular and inclusive character — the Constitution accommodates Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, women, remote Andaman and Nicobar communities, different languages and religions (NCERT §6.4, pp. 91–92). The citizenship provisions are in **Part II** of the Constitution (Articles 5–11), supplemented by parliamentary laws (chiefly the Citizenship Act, 1955); Indian citizenship can be acquired by **birth, descent, registration, naturalisation, or inclusion of territory**, and the state cannot discriminate among citizens on grounds only of religion, race, caste, sex or place of birth.

§ 6.5 Universal Citizenship (pp. 92–93) addresses stateless people. Every state fixes criteria for granting citizenship even while supporting the idea of inclusive citizenship; refugees and illegal migrants — Palestinians, Darfur Sudanese, Burmese (now Myanmarese), Bangladeshis — often become stateless, and so cannot legally work, educate their children or own property. The **UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)** is appointed to help such people. India has provided refuge to persecuted peoples — most famously the **Dalai Lama and his followers in 1959**; many migrants remain stateless for generations, with only a few granted citizenship. **§ 6.6 Global Citizenship** (pp. 94–95) describes the interconnected world — illustrated by the global sympathy for the **2004 South Asian tsunami** victims, the cross-border reach of terrorist networks, and UN cooperation on bird flu — and argues for a notion of **global citizenship** that **supplements (not replaces)** national citizenship. Global citizenship could help solve cross-border problems like migration and statelessness, but **full and equal membership of a state remains important**, because socio-economic inequalities within a country can only be solved by that state's government and people.

2.2 Definitions to memorise

Term	Definition	Page
Citizenship	Full and equal membership of a political community involving rights and obligations.	80
Political rights	Right to vote, contest elections, form/join parties.	80

Term	Definition	Page
Civil rights	Freedom of speech, belief.	80
Socio-economic rights	Minimum wage, right to education.	80
Equality of rights and status	Basic content of citizenship in all democracies.	80
Citizen-citizen obligations	Legal duties (taxes, laws) + moral duty to share in community life.	82
Insider–outsider divide	The "Mumbai for Mumbaikars" type slogan when resources are scarce.	82
Right to freedom of movement	Constitutional right enabling migration of workers across India.	83
Segregation Laws	Laws in southern US states that denied blacks civil/ political rights; opposed by King.	83
Non-violent resistance	Method of struggle Martin Luther King Jr. advocated.	83
Right to protest	Derived from freedom of expression; conditional on not harming life/property/State.	84
National Policy on Urban Street Vendors	Framed January 2004 to recognise and regulate street vendors.	87
T. H. Marshall	British sociologist (1893–1981); author of Citizenship and Social Class (1950).	87
Civil rights (Marshall)	Rights that protect life, liberty and property.	87
Political rights (Marshall)	Rights enabling participation in the process of governance.	87
Social rights (Marshall)	Rights giving access to education and employment.	87
Olga Tellis v BMC (1985)	Supreme Court held Article 21's right to life includes right to livelihood.	88
Uniform policy fallacy	Equal rights does NOT require identical policies for all groups.	88
Nation-state	Modern political form combining nation + sovereign state.	90
French Revolution (1789)	One of the earliest assertions of nation-state sovereignty and democratic rights.	90
Citizenship Act, 1955	Indian law operationalising Part II of the Constitution.	92
Modes of acquiring Indian citizenship	Birth, descent, registration, naturalisation, inclusion of territory.	92
Stateless people	Refugees and migrants whom no state will accept; cannot legally work or own property.	92–93
UNHCR		93

Term	Definition	Page
	UN High Commissioner for Refugees, appointed to help stateless persons.	
Dalai Lama (1959)	Granted refuge in India along with his followers.	93
Global citizenship	Supplementary (not replacement) notion of citizenship for cross-border problems.	94–95

2.3 Diagrams / processes to remember

A photograph of a hillside slum in a city (p. 86) brings out the lived conditions of slum-dwellers and poses the equal-rights question concretely; CUET stems often use this image as the stimulus for an MCQ on social rights and the National Policy on Urban Street Vendors. The **Republic Day parade in Delhi** (p. 92) is evidence of the state's continuing attempt to include people of different regions, cultures and religions within a single political community. Memorise three boxed extracts in particular. First, the **Martin Luther King Jr.** box on p. 83 — his denunciation of segregation as "social leprosy on the body politic", his argument that segregation diminishes the life of whites as much as blacks, and his call for non-violent resistance to unjust laws. Second, the **T. H. Marshall** box on p. 87 — his definition of citizenship as a "status bestowed on those who are full members of a community", his insistence that the key concept is equality (of both quality and quantity of rights and duties), and his three-fold classification into civil, political and social rights. Third, the **Olga Tellis v. Bombay Municipal Corporation (1985)** box on p. 88 — the Supreme Court's holding that the right to life under Article 21 includes the right to livelihood, with the consequence that pavement dwellers must be provided alternative accommodation before eviction.

Two processes are tested repeatedly. **Process A — Marshall's three-rights chain:** civil rights (life, liberty, property) → political rights (participation in governance) → social rights (education, employment); citizenship is the integrating status that ties them together and counters class hierarchy. **Process B — modes of acquiring Indian citizenship** under the Citizenship Act, 1955 and Part II of the Constitution: birth → descent → registration → naturalisation → inclusion of territory. Drill the order and the count (five modes). A useful timeline to memorise is: French Revolution (1789) → US Civil Rights Movement (1950s) → Dalai Lama refuge in India (1959) → Olga Tellis judgment (1985) → end of South African apartheid (early 1990s) → National Policy on Urban Street Vendors (January 2004) → South Asian tsunami (2004).

2.5 Key Articles / Treaties / Events

Reference	Source / Subject	NCERT cite
Indian Constitution, Part II (Arts. 5–11)	Citizenship provisions	p. 92
Citizenship Act, 1955	Operationalises modes of acquiring Indian citizenship	p. 92

Reference	Source / Subject	NCERT cite
Article 21 of the Constitution	Right to life; Olga Tellis read right to livelihood into it	p. 88
Olga Tellis v BMC (1985)	Supreme Court case linking livelihood to Art. 21	p. 88
French Revolution, 1789	Earliest assertion of nation-state sovereignty	p. 90
US Civil Rights Movement (1950s)	Martin Luther King Jr. against Segregation Laws	p. 83
End of South African apartheid (early 1990s)	Cited as a struggle for citizenship	p. 81
Dalai Lama refuge in India, 1959	Indian example of granting refuge to persecuted	p. 93
Indian Partition, 1947	India retained secular, inclusive character despite Partition	p. 91
National Policy on Urban Street Vendors, January 2004	Recognised informal-sector livelihood rights	p. 87
UDHR / UNHCR	UN framework protecting stateless persons	p. 93
Marshall, <i>Citizenship and Social Class</i> (1950)	Source of the civil-political-social rights trilogy	p. 87
2004 South Asian tsunami	Cited as global event evoking global citizenship sympathies	p. 94
Five grounds of constitutional non-discrimination	Religion, race, caste, sex, place of birth	p. 92
France: ban on religious symbols in schools	Cited as limit of assimilationist nation-building	pp. 90–91

2.4 Common confusions / NTA trap points

- Marshall's three rights** are **civil, political and social** — NOT "civil, political and economic" or "fundamental, directive and social" (p. 87). NTA frequently swaps "social" for "economic".
- Indian citizenship is acquired by FIVE modes** — birth, descent, registration, naturalisation, inclusion of territory (p. 92). NOT "marriage" or "domicile".
- Olga Tellis (1985)** located the right to livelihood in **Article 21 (right to life)** — not Article 19 (movement) or Article 14 (equality) (p. 88).

4. **National Policy on Urban Street Vendors was framed in January 2004** (p. 87) — do not confuse with the Street Vendors (Protection of Livelihood and Regulation of Street Vending) Act, 2014.
5. **Dalai Lama came to India in 1959** — not 1962 (the year of the Sino-Indian war) (p. 93).
6. **Global citizenship supplements, NOT replaces, national citizenship** (p. 95). A frequent trap.
7. **NCERT definition of citizenship** is "**full and equal membership of a political community**" (p. 80) — not "legal nationality" or "right to vote".
8. **King's metaphor** for segregation is "**social leprosy**" on the body politic (p. 83) — not "social disease" or "social cancer".
9. **Citizenship provisions are in Part II of the Constitution** (Arts. 5–11), supplemented by the **Citizenship Act, 1955** (p. 92). NTA may attribute provisions only to the Act and ignore the Constitution, or vice-versa.
10. **France's secular ban on religious symbols** (Sikh turbans, Muslim headscarves) illustrates the limits of assimilationist nation-building (pp. 90–91).
11. **Citizenship is a "project" / evolving ideal**, not a finished accomplishment (NCERT closing argument) — NTA may frame it as a static legal status only.
12. **Five constitutional grounds of non-discrimination among citizens** — religion, race, caste, sex, place of birth (p. 92).

Practice MCQs

PYQ Alignment

This chapter is a regular source of 5–7 CUET MCQs every year. The most frequently tested anchors are the NCERT definition of citizenship, T. H. Marshall's three-fold classification of rights, the Olga Tellis judgment (1985) and Article 21, the five modes of acquiring Indian citizenship under Part II of the Constitution, the 1959 Dalai Lama refuge example, and the distinction between national and global citizenship. King's "social leprosy" quotation, the January 2004 National Policy on Urban Street Vendors and the five constitutional grounds of non-discrimination are recurring direct-recall items. For full chapter-wise PYQ mapping see </pyq/political-science>.